1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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nawal[73]), which inhabit the hills, caves, deep water pools, etc. They are extremely malevolent and they are ever ready to injure the people, causing disease or death. They are especially dangerous after sundown, when the fear of them makes a coward of the most daring and courageous Indians.

The Indian has a natural reluctance to reveal his religious ideas, especially such as he suspects to seem ridiculous to a stranger. It is therefore very difficult to obtain reliable information from them pertaining to this subject. At the death of a person the material body undergoes dissolution and one or more spirits are set free and roam about doing mischief, until they are directed by the sukya to the Hereafter. Animals likewise have spirits, or they may be possessed by evil spirits.

Conspicuous hills are generally haunted by evil spirits, and the latter are said to have carved the petroglyphs found at certain large river falls. Peculiarly shaped rocks are supposed to have been formerly human beings, who have become petrified, generally as a punishment.[74] Not only may sentient beings be changed into rocks, but they may also originally have issued from them. A Sumu legend traces the origin of that tribe to the Kaunapa Hill on the left bank of Rio Patuca, to a place where petrified navels are said to exist.

Trees and plants appear to be animated by spirits (M.: *lilka;* T., P.: *wayani;* U.: *wayaka*), which affect their growth and the ripening of their fruits. In order to increase the yield of a fruit tree, or to render barren trees productive, several objects are placed on their branches after having been blown upon (M.: *yubakan*) by the sukya. Vegetal attraction charms, which are carried for good luck in the various walks of life, would seem to point toward an original belief in plants possessing associated spirits.

Indians will keep at a certain distance from spirits and do not look at them nor point to them, nor even talk of them, as they might materialize, for, "speak of the devil and he is sure to appear." They even refuse to look at certain places haunted by evil spirits, and if they have to pass at close distance they will turn away the face in an opposite direction.

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[73] This word has evidently a close philological connection with *Nagualli*, the name of a magical high priest of the Aztecs; he was celibate and was supposed to assume animal shape at will. From his name is derived the term "nagualism," a species of sorcery still existing among the ignorant Ladinos in certain regions of Central America. *Nawa* or *nawà* is also the Sumu name for "puma" or "jaguar." Cf. also *nawal* "sorcerer" and *nawal-sà* "to predict, to enchant," in the Quiché language of Guatemala.

[74] On the right bank of Rio Coco, opposite Yaluk Hill, there are some rocks which are believed to be the petrified remains of a great Sumu sukya, named Panamaka, who lived on the said hill.